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ABSTRACT

The implementation of uniform standards for assessing prospective teachers' competencies in basic skills prior to admission is growing rapidly. There is also a trend toward increasing the grade point average required for admission. Policies on admission to teacher education programs reflect concern about the decline in both the number and quality of the talent pool and the decline in public confidence in teachers and teaching. An analysis is presented of the impact of more stringent admissions criteria on schools of education. The question is raised of conditions or resources needed to implement such admission policies, and a brief discussion is presented on both the advantages and disadvantages of the policies. Also considered are the views of educational practitioners and the effects on teacher education programs and faculties. The effects of higher admission standards on teacher education students and public perceptions about teaching are discussed. A keyed map provides information on states implementing and planning new policies for admission to teacher education. An article on state assessment trends is appended, as well as brief annotations on the activities of 23 states relative to standards for admission to teacher education programs. (JD)

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STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION TO TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

An Issue Paper Prepared For

The Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board

by

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STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION TO TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

I. General Description and Overview

Although teacher education institutions have claimed selective admissions to teacher education for many years, only recently have the data supported the extensive use of tests of basic skills as a criterion for entry. Carpenter, in a 1972 study of selective admissions procedures of 180 randomly selected member institutions of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), found that practically all used some type of selective admission procedure but only 17% used a professional examination of any type. Of those institutions using a professional examination, the most popular test was the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory.[1] Other researchers, including Kuuskraa and Morra,[2] Brubacher and Patton,[3] and Arnold, et al.,[4] agreed with Carpenter's findings that practically all teacher education institutions have employed some system of selective admission. The primary criteria used, however, were grades, recommendations, and interviews.

Since 1977, the criteria for admission to teacher education programs have changed drastically. The most significant of these changes is the requirement of competency testing in the basic skills areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. The next most significant change is the increase in grade point average required for admission.

A recent survey conducted by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education found that 64% of all reporting institutions (356) used screening tests for admission to teacher education programs. Of the institutions requiring tests, 86% required tests of basic skills. The areas of

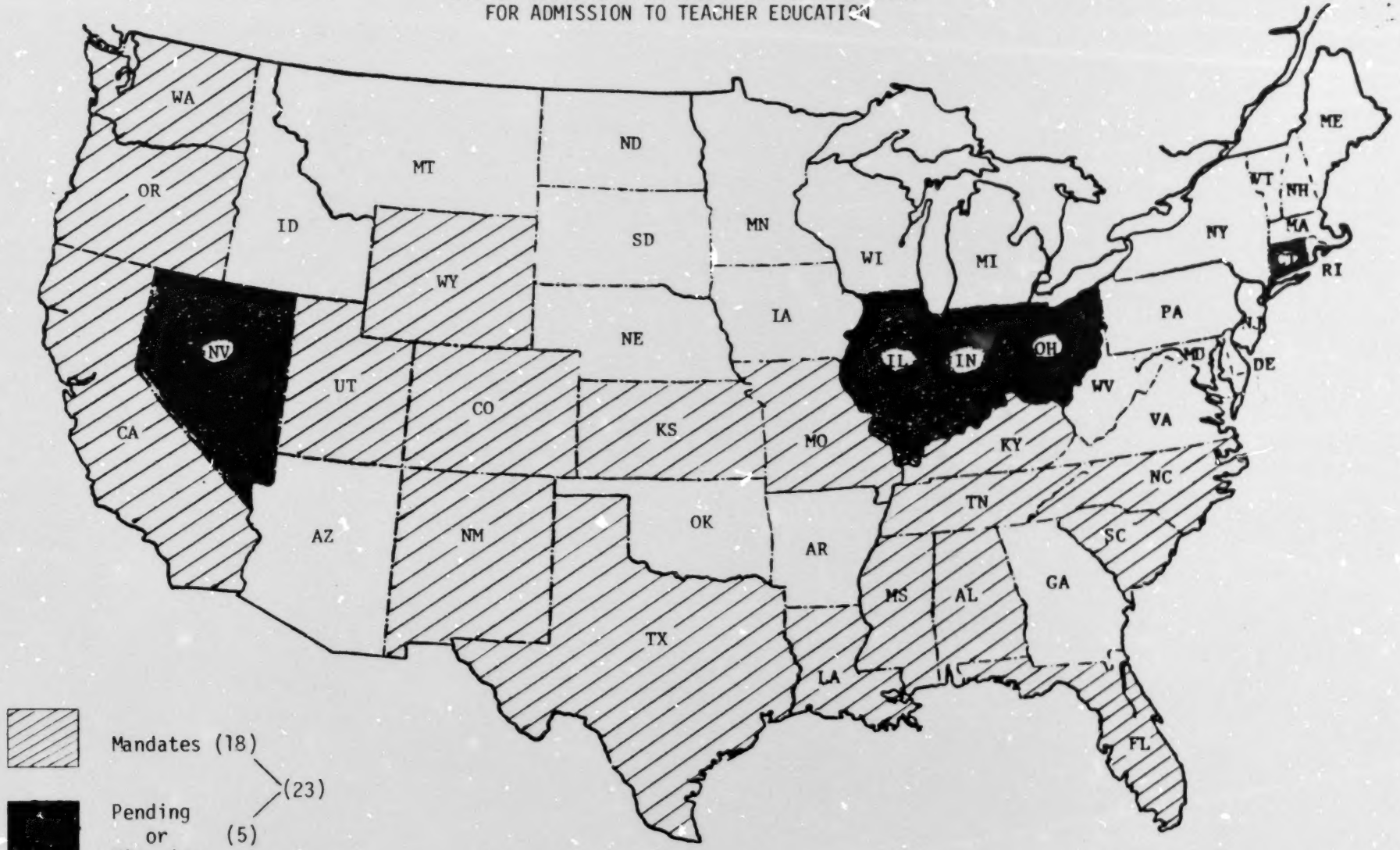
basic skills tested were reading (74%), mathematics (69%), and writing (89%). Thirty-five percent reported tests other than reading, mathematics, and writing.[5]

The testing of prospective teachers, both for entry into teacher education programs and for initial certification, grew out of an earlier movement to test the competency of elementary and secondary students. If students' test scores fell appreciably below the public's expectations, and they did, then it was understandable that the public could believe that some part of the problem could be traced to teaching and teachers. Consequently, state legislatures and state departments of education, responding to public opinion, mandated that teachers should be tested to assure their competency and, hopefully, assure their safe practice with children.

Most state plans for teacher competency assessment include testing of one or more areas of (1) basic skills, (2) professional or pedagogical skills, and (3) academic knowledge. The testing occurs at the entry level; that is, admission to the teacher education program and/or prior to certification. A growing number of states require an internship or beginning teacher year with appropriate assessment before initial certification can be awarded.[6] Further information about the national status of competency assessment can be found in Appendix A.

As of July 1, 1984, 32 states reported mandates for some type of competency testing of teachers. Eighteen of the states reported standards for admission to teacher education programs and five states reported plans that were pending. A glance at the following map will show the identity and location of the states with mandates for admission to teacher education programs. Appendix B provides a brief statement of the provision of each of the 23

STATES IMPLEMENTING AND PLANNING POLICIES
FOR ADMISSION TO TEACHER EDUCATION



states implementing or planning to implement standards for admission to teacher education programs.[7]

An analysis of Appendix B will show that although there are variations in the requirements, all 23 states require evidence of competency in basic skills areas. These areas are, almost invariably, communication skills and mathematical skills. Evidence of competency may be obtained from a number of sources. At least six (6) states will accept ACT or SAT scores. The range of minimum scores indicated for the ACT are 16 to 18. The range of scores indicated for the SAT are 745 to 835. At least four states will accept the General Knowledge and Communications Sections of the National Teachers Examination. The Competency Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) is used by at least two states as is the Preprofession Skills Test (PPST) and the California Achievement Test (CAT). At least three states, California, South Carolina, and Mississippi, have developed statewide standardized tests through contracts with test publishing companies such as the Educational Testing Service. In summary, at least 16 states are using some form of standardized test of basic skills. Cut-off scores vary but are usually based on a state derived norm.

In addition to the 23 states with uniform standards for admissions, another 21 require admissions standards relative to competency in the basic skills areas and grade point averages but hold the institutions of higher education (IHE) responsible for identifying the tests, cut-off scores, and grade point averages. The majority of these states, however, require state department of education approval of the institution's admissions plan. Only nine states--Alaska, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming--report no SBE policies relative to admissions to teacher education programs.[8] Of these nine states, New

Hampshire expects to have a policy on testing for basic skills by December 1985[9] and Wyoming's only teacher education institution, the University of Wyoming, already has in place a testing program in basic skills for admission to its teacher education programs (see Appendix B).

The implementation of uniform standards for assessing prospective teacher competencies in basic skills prior to admission is of recent origin but growing rapidly. Of the 23 states with such policies, only Tennessee's 1979 implementation date occurred prior to 1980. All of the remaining implementation dates have occurred within the past five years.[10] There is reason to believe that the movement will continue to grow in response to the public's demand for better schools and better teaching. The attitude of chief state school officers can best be summarized through a recommendation made by their Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Certification, Preparation, and Accreditation. The recommendation stated:

> A system of assessing and screening prospective teacher candidates should be implemented in every state, and this system should include procedures for screening for literacy and screening for personal qualities needed in persons entering the profession.[11]

Although grade point average (GPA) has been a criterion for admission to teacher education programs for many years, there has been a pronounced trend to raise the GPA in recent years. Using the Carpenter study as a reference point for 1972[12] and a study conducted by Laman and Reeves in 1982 using a similar population of AACTE institutional members,[13] the following comparisons can be made:

GPA As a Factor in Admissions to Teacher Education
1972-1982

	1972 N 180	1982 N 121
Percent of institutions using GPA as a criterion for entry	95	95
Median overall GPA required	2.00*	2.20
Mode overall GPA	2.00	2.50
GPA required in major	2.20	2.50

* All GPA's are reported on a 4.0 scale

As can be seen from the preceding information, as well as from state activity summaries in Appendix B, the trend in GPA's as a criterion for admission is typically a 2.5 GPA overall. The range is from 2.00 to 3.0. No evidence was found of requirements of GPA's above 3.0.

II. Analysis

A. What problems is the policy intended to solve?

There are two primary but related problems that the policies on admission to teacher education programs are designed to address: (1) both the number and quality of the talent pool (applicants) for teacher education have declined and (2) public confidence in teaching and teachers has declined. Qualitative standards for admission to the programs leading to teacher certification are seen as a means of screening out unqualified applicants as well as a means of strengthening the profession to attract better qualified candidates. As a result, the public's confidence in teaching and teachers should improve significantly.

The national concern about the quality of teachers entering the profession was given additional impetus by the widely read report, "A Nation at Risk" published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The Commission found ". . . that not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to teaching. . ." The Commission concluded "Too many teachers are being drawn from the bottom quarter of graduating high school and college students."[14] These findings were no doubt partially drawn from the work of W. Timothy Weaver, whose research has pointed to a national decline in SAT and ACT scores with an even greater decline in the scores of those students preparing to enter the teaching profession.[15]

The declining number of teachers entering and remaining in the classroom can be documented from a number of sources. Between 1972 and 1980, enrollment in teacher education declined by approximately 50%.[16] They have continued to drop since. AACTE reported a decline of 7.9% in education degrees conferred between the academic years of 1981-82 and 1982-83.[17] The ultimate result of the sharply declining enrollments in teacher education programs is an impending teacher shortage. In fact, the National Center for Education Statistics projects an imbalance in supply/demand by 1985 and what appears to be a severe shortage by 1990. Specifically, the Center projects the new teacher demand in 1990 to be 220,000 and the supply to be only 160,000.[18]

B. Are there conditions or resources that need to be present to implement the policy successfully?

If the assumption is made that the evidence supports the need to establish policies to enhance recruitment, admission, and retention into teacher education programs, then certain conditions should be present to assure successful implementation of those policies.

1. There must be an authority for the policy. Most states choosing to develop and implement policies for admission to teacher education have issued mandates with either legislative or state board of education authority.
2. There should be widespread participation of concerned constituencies in the development of policy. Most states have used committees with wide representation to develop policy. Many states have used existing structures such as councils on teacher education and certification and boards of teaching.
3. There must be a system to monitor the implementation of policy. Most, if not all, states assign this responsibility to state boards of education.
4. There should be a continuous system for evaluating the results of the policy and reporting the results back to institutions and the public.

C. What are perceived advantages and benefits of the policy?

The most obvious benefit of a policy on admission would be the necessary mechanism for screening out unqualified applicants. A secondary, but hoped-for, benefit would be the enhancement of the image of the profession as one with high standards and, therefore, more desirable to those of high academic ability. The residual benefit, assuming that both the primary and secondary benefits were realized, would be increased public confidence in teachers and schools and, hopefully, increased support for education.

D. What are the perceived disadvantages and flaws in the policy?

There are at least two serious disadvantages to qualitative standards for admission to teacher education programs: (1) more restrictive admission policies will likely contribute further to a developing teacher shortage and (2) there is evidence that with restrictive policies, a disproportionate number of minority students will be excluded from the teaching profession.

It is evident that states planning to implement stringent admission policies should do so with an awareness of diminishing teacher supply. Furthermore, it appears that such states should also develop plans for recruitment of high ability students, improved teacher salaries, and improved working conditions for teachers. Otherwise, states will, as they have done historically, be forced to place unqualified teachers with emergency certification in the schools to prevent unmanned classrooms.

The impact of competency testing and other restrictive features of selective admission policies on minorities is severe. For example, in states where competency testing is practiced, the following results have been obtained:

1. Florida reports that 38% of minority and 90% of the whites passed Florida's teacher test in 1983.
2. Louisiana reported that 78% of the whites passed the Louisiana test whereas up to 90% of the students in predominantly black schools failed.
3. Texas' newly required test for admission to teacher education programs was passed by 63% of the whites, 20% of the latinos, and 12% of the blacks.[19]

In Kentucky, piloting testing of the National Teachers Examination indicated a failure rate of blacks to whites of four to one. Nationwide, 12.5% of teachers were minority in 1980. This number will drop to 5% by 1990, according to G. Pritchy Smith, who has compiled information on the impact of state testing programs on minorities.[20]

E. How is the policy viewed by teacher education students and faculty, practicing teachers, school administrators, and other constituencies?

Reactions to more stringent admission policies and practices are mixed. Valid evidence collected through research has been elusive. However, it is the writer's interpretation that most constituencies favor selective admission policies for the following reasons:

1. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education at their annual meeting in Dallas, Texas, in February passed the following resolution:

   > In recognition of the need for quality teacher education, AACTE supports a test of basic skills as a criterion for entry or continuance in teacher education programs.

2. In the 1979 Gallup Poll, 85% of those polled indicated their belief that teachers should be required to pass a state examination to prove their knowledge in the subjects they will teach and that they should be continually retested.[21]
3. The chief state school officers in their publication, "Staffing the Nation's Schools: A National Emergency," recommended that a system of assessing and screening prospective teacher candidates should be implemented by every state.[22]
4. The National Education Association's Standards for Approving College of Education Programs lists the following standard:

"procedures for student admittance, continued enrollment, and graduation are consistent with program purposes."[23]

5. The report, A Nation At Risk's Recommendation B states: "We recommend that schools, colleges, and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations, for academic performance and student conduct and that 4-year colleges and universities raise their requirements for admission . . ."[24]

Although some minority educators say that tests reveal an educational problem of minorities, others, including Asa Hilliard, a Professor of Education at Georgia State University, say the tests are "invalid" because they are "linguistically and culturally biased, and because they are also unconnected to teaching effectiveness."[25]

III. Evaluation

A. Has the policy been systematically evaluated?

The writer has been unable to find evidence of a systematic evaluation of admission practices that has attempted to determine the relationship between those practices and teacher performance in the classroom. The absence of valid studies that correlate test scores, grades, and other admission criteria to effectiveness of classroom teaching is a source of concern to educators and to the public.

There are several valid reasons for the paucity of evaluation results. First, the movement is of recent origin, primarily since 1980, and few students subjected to the more rigorous admission standards have entered the classroom as teachers. Perhaps even more

significant is the difficulty of such research. Researchers have great difficulty, even under the most carefully controlled conditions, in attributing any single dimension of classroom behavior to a single variable. The reason being, of course, that any characteristic of an effective teacher is the result of the interaction of a number of variables over time. Nevertheless, with adequate numbers of subjects, researchers must conduct more research designed to relate variables such as academic knowledge and grades earned in college to probable success as a teacher. Apparently, the acceptance of certain selective admissions criteria, such as test scores, grade point averages, and other assessments, is based on empirical evidence or assumption that these are indicators of effective teachers.

The validity of tests to measure general knowledge and basic skills is not in question. Developers and publishers of standardized tests provide evidence of the validity and reliability of the test and educators accept these data. It is, instead, the next step that is without reliable documentation, and that is the relationship between test scores and classroom performance.

B. What have been the effects on teacher education programs and faculty?

Three factors have caused a serious decline in enrollments in departments, schools, and colleges of education: (1) the supply of teachers has exceeded the demand for the past several years causing many prospective teachers to opt for other careers; (2) conditions for teaching, including salary, discipline, and public regard, have worsened in comparison with other options available to talented students; and (3) more rigorous standards for admission have denied

entry to significant numbers of prospective teachers. As a result of these factors, it is generally estimated that most teacher education program enrollments have declined by approximately 50%.[26]

The impact of state mandated admission requirements is difficult to assess. In the writer's survey of the eighteen states using some form of admission standards, the request was made for data indicating denials as a result of the testing program. No responses were received for that item. However, in Kentucky, early data indicate that the requirement for a 12th grade basic skills competency and a 2.5 GPA will deny entry to 18-24% of all applicants. Again, it should be noted that data are difficult to obtain because many prospective applicants, recognizing that their GPA is inadequate, never apply. Moreover, others, having taken the tests of competency in basic skills and receiving low scores, never apply. Accurate data on denials, however, is unimportant when compared to evidence of the qualifications of those admitted.

C. What have been the effects on teacher education students?

Again, data are elusive. To the writer's knowledge there has been no student outcry raised against more rigorous admission standards. Some students, having failed competency tests, have taken remediation and have retaken the test. Others have chosen other career options. Grade point averages are more difficult to raise and may prove to be a greater obstacle to admission than tests of basic skills.

D. What have been the effects on public perceptions about teaching and the teacher profession?

There are indicators that, as a result of educational reforms, the public is exhibiting increased confidence and support for education.

The Report of the U. S. Department of Education entitled, "The Nation Responds," cites numerous instances of increased public support as a result of the attention called to education by recent studies and the resultant reforms initiated by educators.[27] Two leading public opinion researchers, Robert M. Teeter and Peter Hart, agreed with a May 1983 Gallup Poll indicating that the American taxpayers will support increased funding for education, but only if quality is assured. The Gallup Poll indicated that 58% of the respondents would pay more taxes to improve education.[28]

E. What will it cost to implement the policy?

Costs to the state are dependent upon tests selected, the complexity of the policy, the system of monitoring and evaluation, and, of course, who pays. The costs of developing customized tests for a state are high. Therefore, most states have elected to use a nationally recognized standardized test, not only because they are more inexpensive, but also because they yield nationally comparative data. States that have chosen to develop customized tests, Georgia for example, have expended large sums on test development.

Moreover, most states have chosen to place the costs of testing on institutions of higher education who, in turn, pass on the costs of tests to applicants. Charges range from minimal zero to $75-80 depending on the tests used and other factors. States should expect start-up costs. Appropriate preliminary study with necessary committee activity will cost as will efforts to determine state norms. Also, the state may find it necessary to employ additional personnel to monitor and evaluate the state's policy.

IV. Other

A. How was information for this paper gathered?

Since 1980, the writer has conducted annual national surveys of state activity in teacher competency assessment. These reports have been presented on numerous occasions and published in several sources. The reports can be found in ERIC for Teacher Education, Washington, D.C. Abbreviated versions have been published in AACTE Briefs. In each survey, attention has been given to admissions testing. In preparation for this paper, each state indicating a state policy for admission to teacher education was surveyed to determine recent developments. These surveys were conducted during June and July 1984. In addition, the literature was searched for relevant data.

B. Is there additional information a state policymaker would want to know before pursuing this alternative?

Reference to any type of psychological testing is noticeably absent from this paper. Efforts on the part of teacher educators to assess the psychological health and mental attitudes of applicants have diminished significantly in recent years. The primary reason for the decline in use of more subjective measures is no doubt the fear of legal action. For whatever reasons, current admission standards tend to rely on objective measures such as standardized tests and grades achieved. The use of psychological testing, according to Laman and Reeves, has diminished from 12.8% of institutions surveyed in 1972 to 6.6% in 1982.[29] From an examination of actions taken by states since 1982 (see Appendix B), there is reason to believe that the use of psychological tests has diminished even further.

Notes

[1]James A. Carpenter, "A Survey of the Criteria for the Selection of Undergraduate Candidates for Admission to Teacher Training," Western Kentucky University Press, Bowling Green, Kentucky, 1973, 50 pp.

[2]V. A. Kuuskraa and Frank Morra, Jr., "Condition of Teacher Education: Draft Summary Report," Lewin and Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C., March 1977, 82 pp.

[3]H. A. Brubacher and O. C. Patton, "Selection and Retention in Teacher Education: Does It Exist?," Teacher Education, 10:2-7, 1975.

[4]Daniel S. Arnold, et al., "Quality Control in Teacher Education: Some Policy Issues," American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, D.C., May 1977, p. 18.

[5]AACTE Briefs, July 1984, Vol. 5, No. 5, p. 8.

[6]J. T. Sandefur, "State Assessment Trends," AACTE Briefs, March 1984, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 17-19.

[7]Information contained in Appendix B was obtained by the author through surveys sent both to the director of teacher education and certification of each state and a dean of a public institution of higher education.

[8]"Staffing the Nation's Schools: A National Emergency," A Report From the Council of State School Officers Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Certification, Preparation, and Accreditation. Council of Chief State School Officers, 400 North Capital Street, Suite 379, Washington, D.C., January 1984, pp. 47-96.

[9]Letter from Dr. George Lewis, Director of Teacher Education and Certification, State Department of Education, Concord, New Hampshire, dated July 1984.

[10]J. T. Sandefur, "State Assessment Trends," p. 18. Also see Appendix A, Table 1.

[11]"Staffing the Nation's Schools: A National Emergency," p. 5.

[12]James A. Carpenter, "A Survey of Criteria for the Selection of Undergraduate Candidates for Admission to Teacher Training."

[13]Archie E. Laman and Dorothy E. Reeves, "Admission to Teacher Education Programs: Status and Trends," Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 1983, pp. 2-4.

[14]The National Commission on Excellence in Education, "A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform," U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., April 1983, p. 22.

[15]W. Timothy Weaver, "The Talent Pool in Teacher Education," The Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. 32, No. 3, May-June 1981, pp. 32-36.

[16]Association for School, College, and University Staffing, "Teacher Supply and Demand 1981," Box 4411, Madison, Wisconsin, p. 2.

[17]AACTE Briefs, July 1984, Vol. 5, No. 5, p. 4.

[18]Virginia Inman, "Certification of Teachers Lacking Courses in Education Stirs Battles in Several States," Wall Street Journal, January 6, 1984.

[19]David G. Savage, "New Teacher Testing is Reducing Minorities in the Field," The Courier-Journal, Louisville, Kentucky, July 19, 1984.

[20]G. Pritchy Smith, "The Critical Issue of Excellence and Equity in Competency Testing," The Journal of Teacher Education, March-April 1984, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 6-9.

[21]Editorial by R. W. Cole, Phi Delta Kappan, December 1979, p. 233.

[22]"Staffing the Nation's Schools: A National Emergency," p. 5.

[23]National Education Association, "Excellence in Our Schools Teacher Education: An Action Plan," 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 1982, p. 22.

[24]Nation At Risk, p. 27.

[25]The Courier-Journal, July 19, 1984, p. A-10.

[26]Association for School, College, and University Staffing, p. 2.

[27]U. S. Department of Education, "The Nation Responds," Washington, D.C., May 1984, p. 229.

[28]Ibid, p. 12.

[29]Laman and Reeves, p. 3.

APPENDIX A

State Assessment Trends

Reprinted from AACTE Briefs, July 1984

STATE ASSESSMENT TRENDS

by J.T. Sandefur, dean, College of Education, Western Kentucky University

Note: The data reported herein were obtained by survey, involving inquiries sent to directors of teacher education and certification in each state and to a selected dean of education in each state. The author is indebted to the individuals who responded.

The writer readily acknowledges that the data presented may contain inaccuracies due to the complexity of programs and the rapid change occurring in many states. Summative descriptions of the activities in each state and a listing of data sources are available by contacting the author at the College of Education, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

Since its beginning in 1977, the movement to assess teacher competence has spread over much of the United States. In October 1983, 30 states reported some type of teacher-assessment program and 12 reported planning serious discussion of such programs. Only eight states reported no action on competency assessment. The nation's interest in ensuring a competent teaching force is evident from the fact that state mandates to test teacher competence increased from three in 1977 to 12 in 1980, to 22 in 1981, to 28 in 1982, to 30 in 1983. Moreover, many of the 12 states that reported planning can be expected to join the movement within the next two years.

The teacher-testing movement grew out of an earlier movement to test the competence of elementary and secondary students. If students' test scores fell appreciably below public expectations—and they did—the public concluded that teachers must bear at least part of the blame. Consequently, state legislatures and state departments of education mandated that teachers be tested to ensure competent and safe teaching practice.

Most state plans for teacher competency assessment include testing in one or more of the following areas: (1) basic skills, (2) professional or pedagogical skills, and (3) academic knowledge. Testing occurs before admission to the teacher education program and/or before certification. In addition, a growing number of states requires an internship or beginning-teacher year with appropriate assessment before awarding initial certification.

The status of the competency-assessment movement in 1983 is shown on the accompanying map. Clearly, activity has concentrated in the southern half of the U.S.—not surprising, since the movement began there.

Although it is difficult to locate the exact beginning of the movement, most authorities consider Louisiana's Acts of 1977, #16, to be significant. That measure stated, " . . . any person applying for initial certification as a teacher must have satisfactorily passed an examination to include English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge in his area of specialization." But there were earlier precursors: North Carolina had required the National Teachers Examinations as a prerequisite for certification since 1964. Georgia began developing its plan as early as 1970 and implemented it in 1978. Florida joined the movement in 1978, followed by Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee in 1979.

The influence of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and its advocacy of teacher competency assessment cannot be overlooked. The SREB not only advocated teacher testing before 1979 but presently advocates reciprocity for programs requiring testing certification among its member states. It is no coincidence that all 14 SREB states mandate teacher testing.

The map also suggests that the movement is expanding northward. Several central and northern states have reported competency-assessment planning or discussion.

States vary considerably in their plans for competency assessment. Programs range from some as simple as Washington and Utah's requirements that institutions of higher education test the basic skills of applicants to teacher education programs, to others as complex as the programs implemented by Florida and Georgia. Table 1 shows the variation and complexity of state programs.

It is interesting to note that 11 states have mandated testing via legislation, while 22 states have issued some type of regulation via the state department of education. Three states issued both department-of-education and legislative mandates. Twelve states require testing for both admission and certification. Inclusively, however, 25 states require testing for certification and 17 require testing for admission to teacher education programs. In terms of skills tested, states are most concerned about basic skills (25), followed by professional or pedagogical skills (20) and academic skills (19).

Increasingly, states are mandating a year of internship or a beginning-teacher year. Such an induction year invariably entails assessment of teaching skills before issuance of a teaching certificate.

Early in the movement, states often developed and used their own tests. Now, many states use nationally standardized tests both for purposes of economy and inter- and intrastate comparison.

Several states indicated in the 1983 survey that they were planning to implement some form of competency assessment, had appointed study groups, or in some other way were seriously considering a plan. Table 2 lists these

(Continued on page 18.)

(From page 17.)

states, indicating their plans insofar as they have been defined.

Presently, 12 states indicate some level of planning. In the past four years, 25 states indicated planning, 13 of them subsequently mandated programs. Four states—Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, and Wisconsin—first indicated planning in 1980 and continue to indicate planning in 1983. Only two states, Iowa and South Dakota, have indicated planning activity at one time and later reported no further planning. Judging from history, at least six of the states presently indicating planning may be expected to mandate programs within the next two years.

Conclusions

Data drawn from four annual surveys of teacher competency assessment in the 50 states suggest that:

1. State competency-assessment programs, having increased from 3 in 1977 to 30 in 1983, will continue to increase, especially since 12 states reported planning activity in 1983.

2. The present emphasis on basic skills testing for certification will continue.

3. Fewer states are using legislative action to mandate competency assessment; more are using state department-of-education regulations.

4. More states are mandating an induction year prior to certification. The year is most frequently called an internship or beginning-teacher year, and it usually includes assessment by a visiting team.

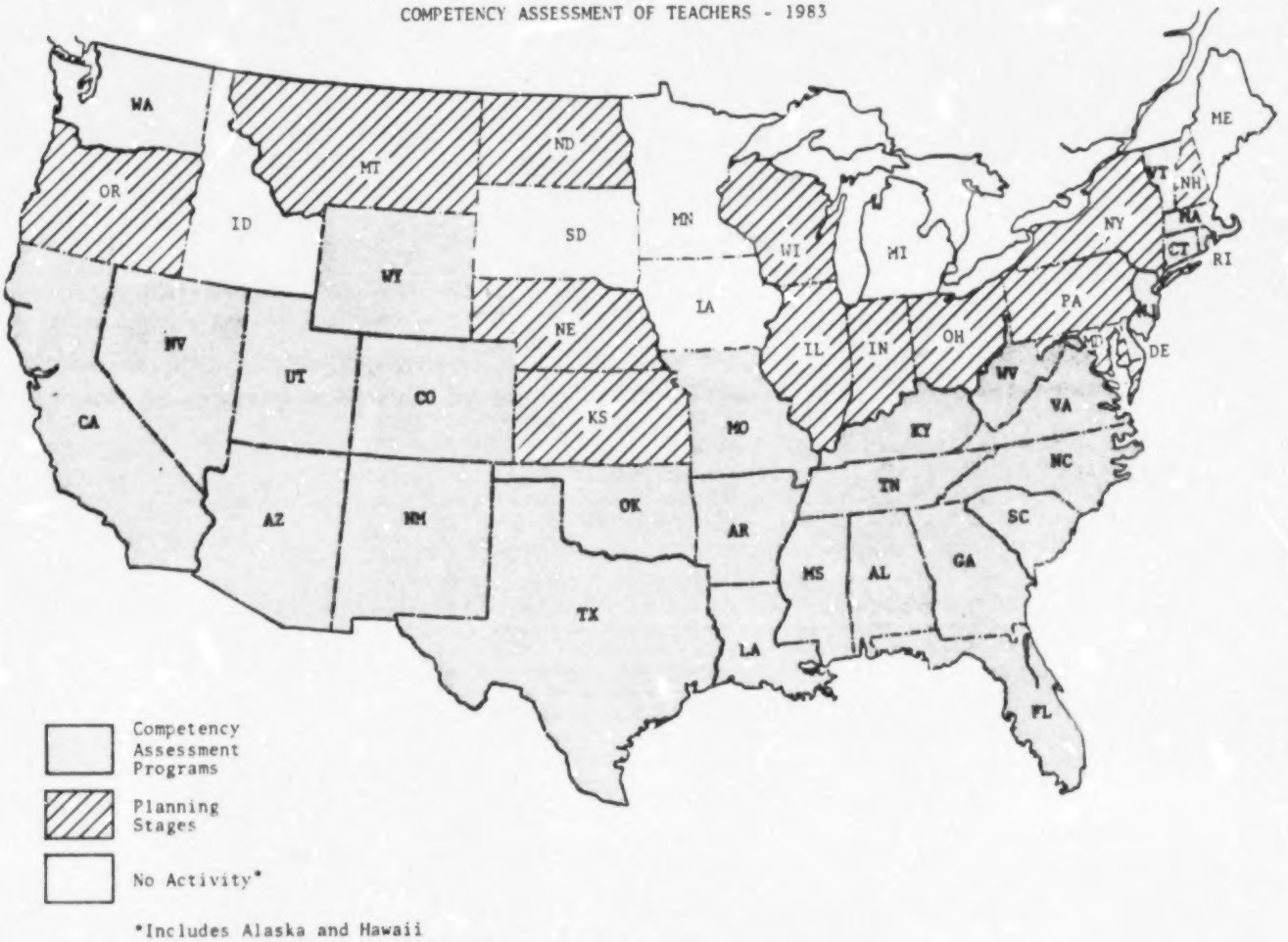
5. More states are choosing to use nationally standardized tests rather than develop their own. Apparently, this is a result of the prohibitive cost of test development and the additional advantage of national and state comparability.

Table 1
States Mandating Competency Assessment of Teachers—1983

	Mandate		*Date*	*Level*		*Skills Tested*					*Type of Tests*
State	*Legislative*	*St. Bd. of Educ*	*Mandated Implemented*	*Admissions*	*Certification*	*Basic*	*Professional*	*Academic*	*On-the-Job*	*National Std.*	*Customized*
Alabama		X	80/81	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Arizona	X	X	80/81		X	X	X				X
Arkansas	X	X	79/83		X	X	X	X		X	
California		X	81/83		X	X		X			X
Colorado	X		81/83	X		X				X	
Connecticut		X	82/85	X	X	X	X	X			X
Delaware		X	82/85		X	X				X	
Florida	X		78/60	X	X	X	X		X		X
Georgia		X	75/78		X		X	X	X		X
Kentucky		X	82/83-85	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Louisiana	X		77/79		X	X	X	X		X	
Massachusetts		X	79/82		X	X	X	X			X
Mississippi		X	82/84	X	X	X	X			X	
Missouri		X	83/84	X	X	X				X	
Nevada	X		82	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
New Jersey		X	83/87		X		X	X		X	X
New Mexico	X	X	81/83	X	X	X	X	X			X
New York		X	83/84		X	X	X		X		
North Carolina		X	79/82	X	X	X	X			X	X
Oklahoma	X		80/82		X	X		X	X		X
Rhode Island		X	/81		X			X			X
South Carolina	X		79/83	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tennessee		X	79/79	X		X	X	X		X	
Texas	X		81/84-86	X	X	X		X		X	
Utah		X		X		X				X	
Vermont		X	/82		X		X	X	X		X
Virginia	X		80/84		X		X	X	X	X	X
Washington		X		X		X				X	
West Virginia		X	82/85	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Wyoming		X		X		X				X	
Totals—30	*11*	*22*		*17*	*25*	*25*	*20*	*19*	*10*	*18*	*16*

Table 2
States Reporting Planning or Discussion of Competency Assessment of Teachers—1983

	Level			Skills Tested			Type of Tests		
State	Admissions	Certification	Basic	Professional	Academic	On-the-Job	Standardized	Customized	Year First Reported Planning
Illinois	X	X	X						1980
Indiana	X		X						1980
Kansas	X	X	X			X			1980
Maryland	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	1982
Montana									1982
Nebraska	X		X						1982
New Hampshire									1983
North Dakota		X	X						1983
Ohio		X	X	X	X			X	1982
Oregon	X	X	X				X		1983
Pennsylvania	X		X						1983
Wisconsin	X	X	X	X	X		X		1980
Totals—12	*8*	*7*	*10*	*3*	*3*	*1*	*3*	*2*	



APPENDIX B

State Activity Relative to Standards for

Admission to Teacher Education

July 1984

State Activity Relative to Standards for
Admission to Teacher Education
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1. Alabama

The English Language Proficiency Test must be passed prior to admission to the undergraduate teacher education program. In addition, the state also requires a score of 16 on the ACT or a score of 745 on the SAT for admission. A GPA of 1.2 on a 3.0 scale is required.

2. California

Applicants for admission to state approved programs of teacher education in California colleges and universities must take the California Basic Skills Test (CBEST) for diagnostic purposes prior to admission A pending recommendation would require teacher education applicants to be in the upper 50% of all students on campus.

3. Colorado

Implementation of a uniform basic skills competency testing program began January 1, 1983. The skills assessed are oral and written English and mathematics. Candidates for certification must present scores at or above the 75th percentile on the California Achievement Test in both mathematics and English, Level 19, to be considered acceptably competent in these areas. Competency in oral English may be demonstrated by successful completion of a college-level public speaking course in which a B- or better is earned. Competency in oral English may also be achieved at a testing center by a competency assessment conducted by a panel of three judges. Each Colorado institution of higher education with an approved teacher education program is a testing center. Testing is restricted to individuals applying for admission to a teacher education program or for an initial Colorado certificate.

4. Connecticut

On April 7, 1982, the Connecticut State Board of Education passed a resolution commending the work of the Professional Development Council and approving the recommendations contained in the report, "Recommendations for Ensuring Professional Competence." The recommendation dealing with competency assessment for admission was:

> That the State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Board of Higher Education (BHE) and representatives of teachers (includes administrators and specialists) and teacher educators, by the Spring of 1985, select or develop a skills examination in mathematics, reading, and writing and set uniform standards to be applied statewide. The examination would be field tested with candidates entering teacher preparation programs in the Fall of 1985. The field test would be used to determine the need for the

test and whether modifications were necessary to assure test validity and eliminate cultural bias. If the previous conditions were met, the test would be used as a screening mechanism for entrance into teacher education.

5. Florida

Since 1980, all state approved teacher education programs have been required to include as an admission requirement a score at or above the 40th percentile on a nationally-normed college entrance examination. This equates to a score of 17 on the ACT and a score of 835 on the SAT.

6. Illinois

The State Board of Education has committed itself to establishing more rigorous and uniform standards for admission into all teacher education programs leading to certification by June 1, 1985. The SBE has requested the State Certification Board to recommend by January 1985 specific policies that address assessment of both content knowledge and practical performance as well as admission standards to programs leading to certification.

7. Indiana

A committee has been named to validate the NTE. It appears that a basic skills test will be required for admission to programs. Tests and cut-off scores have not been determined. Implementation date has been set for July 1, 1985.

8. Kansas

Preadmission tests for entry into teacher education programs were implemented in the Fall semester of 1983 at the six state universities. Included are NTE's preprofessional skills tests in writing, mathematics, and reading. A GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale is required for admission by SBE mandate.

9. Kentucky

All applicants for admission into teacher education programs are required to score at or above the 12th grade level on a standardized test in English and mathematics. The test is the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Also required is an overall GPA of 2.5 before admission to student teaching.

10. Louisiana

Act 756 of 1977 set a GPA requirement of 2.2 on a 4.0 scale for admission. Required NTE general education and communication tests are being considered prior to program admission.

11. Mississippi

Admission to teacher education as required by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning is as follows:

Successful completion of the College Outcome Measures Project (COMP) Exam. A student is required to take only the speaking and writing areas of the COMP if that student has a 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) overall grade point average at the end of the first semester of the sophomore year or if that student has earned a composite score of at least 18 on the ACT Assessment. No student can bypass the speaking and writing areas of the COMP.

A score of 170 is required on the COMP Composite Examination; a score of 17 is required on the speaking area of the COMP; and a score of 17 is required on the writing area of the COMP.

12. Missouri

On May 14, 1981, the Missouri State Board of Education established a regulation requiring prospective teachers to make a passing score on either the ACT or SAT before being admitted to a teacher education program. The regulation has the following implementation steps:

1. Basic competency requirements became effective July 1, 1984, for all students prior to formal admission into the professional teacher education programs of the institutions of higher education in Missouri.

2. The American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) will be used to test for the competency required.

3. If a student has previously taken the ACT or SAT, the institution of higher education may accept those scores.

4. A student testing below the established entry-level score of 800 on the SAT or 18 on the ACT may qualify for formal admission into the teacher education program by:

   a. retaking the ACT or SAT and scoring at or above the established entry-level score.
   b. demonstrating entry-level competency in appropriate college courses and on tests administered by the institution. This option may be used in those exceptional instances where, in the judgment of the faculty, the ACT or SAT does not reveal the student's basic competency.

5. Students with physical handicapping conditions preventing valid test administration of the ACT or SAT may be evaluated for basic competency in reading, English usage, and mathematics through appropriate testing instruments and/or procedures by psychometrists designated or approved by the appropriate academic officer of the institution.

6. Each institution in Missouri with a teacher education program shall develop a written policy to implement the above requirements as part of its planned teacher education program.

The new regulations took effect on July 1, 1984.

13. Nevada

A study is underway. Colleges are presently utilizing the Educational Testing Service (PPST) Examination to gather and analyze data.

14. New Mexico

Institutions preparing teachers are required to administer a written basic skills examination in reading, writing, and math prior to admission (effective July 1, 1983). Institutions may select tests and institutional cut-off scores. Also, a 2.5 GPA is required. The Nelson-Denny Test is required in reading. An ACT score of 26 in language and 22 in math will demonstrate competency.

15. North Carolina

Requires pre-teacher education screening in basic skills using the NTE General Knowledge and Communication Skills sections. Effective July 1, 1984, a minimum score of 632 on the Communications Skills Test will be required for formal admission to approved programs. This score will be raised to 636 on July 1, 1986. The General Knowledge score for July 1, 1984, is 627, to be raised to 631 by July 1, 1986.

16. Ohio

The Ohio Teacher Education and Certification Commission recently submitted a report that recommended that all colleges and universities preparing teachers should conduct verbal and mathematical skills assessments prior to admission to teacher education programs. Tests and cut-off scores must be approved by the State Department of Education. The goal is to have new standards in effect by December 1985.

17. Oregon

The Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) has approved unanimously a bill that will require all prospective teachers to pass a basic skills test before certification. Some professional groups want the test given early enough to allow for remediation. A committee has been appointed to determine the test and time of testing.

18. South Carolina

Requires the administration of a basic skills examination of all students entering teacher education programs. The Education Entrance Examination (EEE) was developed under contract with the Planning, Development, and Evaluation Associates of Tampa, Florida. It measures basic skills in communications and mathematics. First administration was in February of 1983. Cut-off scores and failure rates for the state are unavailable.

19. Tennessee

The State Board of Education mandated (November 1979) that all applicants seeking admission to approved teacher education programs shall (1) attain a minimum raw score on the California Achievement Test (a 1979 minimum of approximately the 9th grade level to a 1982 requirement of approximately 12th grade level) or (2) present an ACT score of 17 or an SAT score of 765. In addition, the directive specified that, commencing January 15, 1981, all applicants for teacher certification shall furnish the SBE a report of scores attained on the NTE Common Exams or the NTE Core Battery beginning in the Fall of 1982.

20. Texas

Recently passed Senate Bill 50 prescribes:

The State Board of Education by rule shall require satisfactory performance on a competency examination of basic skills prescribed by the Board as a condition to admission into an approved teacher education program.

The State Board of Education has selected the Pre-Professional Skills Test published by the Educational Testing Service for use in determining basic skills attainment for admission purposes. During academic year 1982-83, a contractor conducted a content validity study and a standard setting study. The State Board will set the passing score in Fall 1983 or Winter 1984 for required use in Spring 1984. The first statewide testing date has been set for March 3, 1984, in approximately 45 testing centers. Minimum scores on the PPST are 171 in mathematics, 172 in reading, and 173 in composition.

21. Utah

The State Department of Education mandates that each institution preparing teachers submits a plan to the SDE indicating how required competency testing in basic skills is accomplished. Testing is required before admission to programs. A GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale is generally required.

22. Washington

Requires that each institution test basic skills for admission and report results to the State Department of Education. Institutions may select instruments and set cut-off scores.

23. Wyoming

The State of Wyoming has no mandates for competency assessment of teachers. However, the only teacher education institution in the state has a program. The College of Education on its own has, effective 1982, instituted a competency assessment program for all students entering the College of Education. During the sophomore year, each student will be

assessed in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Students will also be required to complete a practicum in the schools where their ability to work with youngsters and other teachers will be assessed both by cooperating teachers and a supervising faculty member from the College. Students who fail to successfully complete this screening process will be counseled out of education and encouraged to enter other programs. At the current time, the California Achievement Test (CAT) is being used as the instrument for evaluating the basic skills of the prospective education students. The 50th percentile on all sub-tests and the total test is required.